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# **B+H Accessibility Policies & Multi-Year Plan**

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# Message from the CEO

At B+H, we design bold and inspiring spaces for people and believe in the power of design to transform spaces, communities and economies. Leadership for us means two things: inspiration and responsibility. Working with and designing for people from all walks of life in varying parts of the globe not only inspires us to contribute and learn from one another but also reminds us of the responsibility we have in creating spaces that are accessible to people of all abilities.

Our commitment to this can be witnessed in projects such as our design of the Abilities Centre in Whitby, Ontario which was created with the objective of being a global centre of excellence for practical knowledge and insight into providing recreation, athletic and performing arts facilities for people with varying degrees of abilities and challenges. This complex is a world-class, barrier-free, indoor facility catering to local, national and international sporting events and was a featured venue in the Parapan Games component of Toronto's 2015 Pan/Parapan American Games.

We are committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence, whether it be through the design of our built environments, our practices in the workplace, or our interactions with staff and clients. We view every challenge as an opportunity for learning and we never lose sight of the people we're working with and designing for.

Yours truly, B+H International LP, by its general partner B+H International GP Ltd.

Bill Nankivell, CEO



# **INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT**

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005) (**"AODA"**) was established with the purpose of developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards across Ontario in order to achieve accessibility for persons with disabilities with respect to the provision of, and access to, goods and services.

B+H International LP ("**B**+**H**") is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence.

We believe in integration, and we are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner. We will do so by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and by meeting our accessibility requirements under the AODA, as witnessed through our policies and plan for the following accessibility standards:

- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Customer Service
- Design of Public Spaces

# **1. GENERAL**

#### **Establishment of Accessibility Policies**

B+H is committed to the development, implementation and maintenance of policies governing how we achieve or will achieve accessibility under Ontario's accessibility laws and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. B+H will modify or remove any existing policy that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

#### Action Taken:

• Accessibility policies have been developed and implemented.

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2014 Implementation timeframe: April 2012 to January 2014 Completion date: January 1, 2014

#### **Accessibility Plans**

B+H is committed to establishing, implementing, maintaining and documenting a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines our organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards.

#### Action Taken:

• Accessibility plans have been developed and implemented.



Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2014 Implementation timeframe: April 2012 to January 2014 Completion date: January 1, 2014

## **Training**

B+H is committed to ensuring that training is provided on Ontario's accessibility laws and on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities to:

- All persons who are an employee of, or a volunteer with, B+H
- All persons who participate in developing the policies for B+H
- All other persons who provide services or facilities on behalf of B+H

We will train the above mentioned on accessibility as it relates to their specific roles. Training will occur as soon as practicable and will be provided on an ongoing basis in connection with any changes to the policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities.

B+H will keep records of the dates on which the training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it has been provided.

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2015 Implementation timeframe: September 2014 to January 2015 Completion date: January 1, 2015

# 2. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS STANDARDS

#### **Feedback**

B+H is committed to ensuring that the process for receiving and responding to feedback is accessible to persons with disabilities by providing or arranging for the provision of accessible formats and communications supports, upon request.

B+H is will notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communications supports with respect to the feedback process and about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

#### Action Taken:

- Provided public notice about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports
- Established internal processes to review feedback and respond
- Committed to responding to feedback in a timely manner through appropriate channel

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2015 Implementation timeframe: September 2013 to January 2015 Completion date: January 1, 2015



## Accessible Formats & Communication Supports

B+H is committed to making our information and communications accessible to people with disabilities. We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. When asked, we will provide information about our organization and its services, including public safety information, in accessible formats or with communication supports.

#### Action Taken:

- Established that we will provide accessible formats and communications to support the needs of people with disabilities
- Committed to ensuring that the person making the request will be consulted to determine appropriate format or communication support
- Committed to ensuring that the format or communication support is provided in a timely manner

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2016 Implementation timeframe: September 2014 to January 2016 Completion date: January 1, 2016

#### **Emergency Procedure, Plans and Safety Information**

B+H is committed to having our emergency response and procedures plan consider the needs of people with disabilities and providing accessible formats of our plan when requested. Where needed, we will provide customized emergency information to help an employee with a disability during an emergency.

#### Action Taken:

- Reviewed existing plan and coordinated with building management to revise the plan to consider the needs of people with disabilities
- Established an emergency evacuation plan for employees with disabilities

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2012 Implementation timeframe: April 2011 to January 2012 Completion date: January 1, 2012

#### Accessible Websites and Web Content

B+H will meet internationally-recognized Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA website requirements in accordance with Ontario's accessibility laws within the required timelines specified in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

#### Action Taken:

- Where possible, WCAG 2.0 Level AA requirements have been included in the approval processes when new web content is created prior to January 1, 2021.
- Compliance with OADA web standards have been included as one of the criteria when selecting new vendors for website development initiatives



#### Required legislative compliance:

- By January 1, 2014, new internet websites and web content on those sites must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level A
- By January 1, 2021, all internet websites and web content must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA

Implementation timeframe: January 2013 to January 2018

**Completion date:** January 1, 2014 for WCAG 2.0 Level A compliance of new internet websites and web content

# **3. EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS**

B+H is committed to fair and accessible employment practices that attract and retain employees with disabilities, including providing accessibility throughout all phases of the employment cycle.

#### **Recruitment, General**

B+H is committed to notifying its employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment processes.

#### Action Taken:

• Specifying that accommodation will be made available for applicants with disabilities on job postings circulated internally to staff and externally on company website and to third party job boards and/or recruiters/recruitment agencies

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2016 Implementation Timeframe: September 2014 to January 2016 Completion date: January 1, 2016

#### **Recruitment, Assessment or Selection Process**

During the recruitment process, B+H is committed to notifying job applicants, when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process, that accommodations are available upon request in relation to the materials or processes to be used.

If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, B+H will consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability.

#### Action Taken:

- Notifying candidates that are invited to participate in the selection process that accommodations can be made upon request
- Consulting with applicant that requests accommodation to take into consideration accessibility needs due to disability and providing the most appropriate accommodation
- Reviewing and modifying exiting recruitment policies and procedures on a regular basis and making modifications as necessary



Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2016 Implementation timeframe: September 2014 to January 2016 Completion date: January 1, 2016

#### **Notice to Successful Applicants**

When making offers of employment, B+H is committed to notifying the successful applicant of our policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

#### Action Taken:

- Reviewed existing recruitment process and revised as necessary
- Included statement in the offer letter and employment agreement about our policies for accommodating employees with disabilities

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2016 Implementation timeframe: September 2014 to January 2016 Completion date: January 1, 2016

#### Informing Employees of Supports

B+H is committed to informing its employees of its policies used to support our employees with disabilities, including, but not limited to, policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

We will provide the information required to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment.

We will provide updated information to employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

#### Action Taken:

- Staff have been notified that supports are available for those with disabilities by circulating the policy and including it in training of staff
- A process has been put in place for the development of individual accommodation plans for employees

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2016 Implementation timeframe: September 2014 to January 2016 Completion date: January 1, 2016

#### Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees

Where an employee with a disability requests, B+H will consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for: information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job; and information that is generally available to employees in the



workplace. We will consult with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

#### Action Taken:

• Staff are notified during their orientation training to get in touch with Human Resources if there is a request for accessible formats and communication supports

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2016 Implementation timeframe: September 2014 to January 2016 Completion date: January 1, 2016

#### Workplace Emergency Response Information

B+H is committed to providing individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability, if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary and we are aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability. We are committed to providing the information as soon as practicable after B+H becomes aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2016 Implementation timeframe: September 2014 to January 2016 Completion date: January 1, 2016

#### **Documented Individual Accommodation Plans**

We are committed to ensuring that barriers in accommodating the return to work process are eliminated and that the accessibility needs of the employee are taken into consideration when developing the plans.

#### Action Taken:

• Developed a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2016 Implementation timeframe: September 2014 to January 2016 Completion date: January 1, 2016

#### **Return to Work Process**

B+H shall develop and have in place a return to work process for its employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work and shall document the process.

The return to work process will include an outline of the steps B+H will take to facilitate the return to work of employees who were absent because their disability required them to be away from work, and use documented individual accommodation plans as part of the process.



#### Action Taken:

- Included employees requesting accommodation in the development of the return to work plans
- Consulted with relevant professionals (ex. healthcare professionals) in developing appropriate return to work plans
- Monitored and documented return to work plans, and adjusted as necessary

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2016 Implementation timeframe: September 2014 to January 2016 Completion date: January 1, 2016

#### **Performance Management**

B+H is committed to taking into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities and individual accommodation plans during our performance management process.

#### Action Taken:

• Reviewed and revised current performance management plan

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2016 Implementation timeframe: September 2014 to January 2016 Completion date: January 1, 2016

#### **Career Development & Advancement**

B+H will take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans, when providing career development and advancement to our employees with disabilities.

#### Action Taken:

• Current policies have been reviewed and revised as necessary

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2016 Implementation timeframe: September 2014 to January 2016 Completion date: January 1, 2016

#### **Redeployment**

B+H will take into account the accessibility needs of our employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when redeploying employees with disabilities.

#### Action Taken:

• Current policies have been reviewed and revised as necessary



Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2016 Implementation timeframe: September 2014 to January 2016 Completion date: January 1, 2016

# 4. CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

B+H is committed to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities. This means that we will provide services to people with disabilities with the same high quality and timeliness as others.

#### **Assistive Devices**

Personal assistive devices and technologies are permitted in all areas of the B+H office. Exceptions may occur when B+H determines that the assistive device may pose a risk to the health and safety of the person with a disability or to others on the premises. In these situations, if a person with a disability is hindered from accessing services, B+H will make every effort to accommodate the individual by providing an alternative where possible. B+H will train, on an ongoing basis, current and future employees and contingent workers in the use of assistive devices and technologies. It should be noted that the provision, use and safety of personal assistive devices and technologies are the responsibility of the person with a disability.

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2012 Implementation timeframe: September 2010 to January 2012 Completion date: January 1, 2012

#### Service Animals

B+H welcomes individuals with disabilities and their guide dog or other service animal. Service animals may accompany the individual in any area of B+H's office that is not prohibited by law. There may be circumstances where the health and safety of another person is at risk when allowing service animals in the office. For example, if an individual has severe allergies to animals, or in an environment where machinery or other equipment are located. In these situations, if a person with a disability is hindered from accessing services, B+H will make every effort to accommodate the individual by providing alternative arrangements where possible. For example, an alternative meeting format, delivery of service at an alternative time/location, etc.

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2012 Implementation timeframe: September 2010 to January 2012 Completion date: January 1, 2012

#### Support Persons

# B+H

B+H is committed to welcoming persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability will be allowed to access any part of B+H's office. There may be situations where confidential or proprietary information relating to B+H is discussed and in these situations B+H reserves the right to request support persons to sign a confidentiality or non-disclosure agreement to allow support persons to accompany the person with a disability.

B+H holds conferences, events, and workshops sponsored by B+H or by third parties that are outside daily work and/or office premises. For such events, support persons are permitted entry except where there is a fee that is payable by B+H or where the support persons have not pre-registered and/or the event does not have vacancy. Support persons will be responsible for their own costs to attend such events.

Individuals with support persons are encouraged to inform relevant persons of their participation/attendance. If the support persons are necessary due to the health and safety of a person with disabilities, or that of others, B+H will require that the support person accompany the individual.

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2012 Implementation timeframe: September 2010 to January 2012 Completion date: January 1, 2012

## **Notice of Temporary Disruptions**

In the event that temporary service or facility disruptions occur that would limit persons with disabilities from gaining access to B+H's services or facilities, B+H will post a notice conspicuously and appropriately at the location of the disruption and on the B+H website. When disruption is planned, advance notice will be given.

## Actions Taken:

• Process has been established for staff and clients to be notified in advance in the event of facility disruption during working hours or beyond working hours, such as water/electrical disruption to the building, fire alarm testing, etc.

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2012 Implementation timeframe: September 2010 to January 2012 Completion date: January 1, 2012

## **Training for Staff and Others**

In addition to the training requirements listed under the general Training section, B+H will ensure that the following persons receive training about services or facilities to persons with disabilities:

- Every person who is an employee of, or a volunteer with, B+H
- Every person who participates in developing the policies of B+H
- Every other person who offers services or facilities on behalf of B+H

## Actions Taken:

Staff and others listed above have been trained on the following:



- A review of the purposes of the AODA and the requirements of the Customer Service Standards
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use assistive devices, service animals or support persons
- How to use equipment or devices available on the premises or provided by B+H that may help with the provision of services to people with disabilities
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulties accessing services provided by B+H
- A review of the policies, practices and procedures related to providing services to people with disabilities

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2012 Implementation timeframe: September 2010 to January 2012 Completion date: January 1, 2012

#### Feedback Process

B+H is committed to a process for receiving and responding to feedback about the manner in which we provide services or facilities to persons with disabilities. We will ensure that the feedback process is accessible to persons with disabilities by providing, or arranging for the provision of, accessible formats and communication supports, on request. We will make information about the feedback process readily available to the public.

Feedback about the delivery of our services to persons with disabilities is welcome as it may identify areas that require change and assist in continuous service improvement. Such feedback may be provided by writing, over the phone or in person to our Human Resource Department at the contact information below:

#### Address:

481 University Avenue, Suite 300 Toronto, ON, Canada, M5G 2H4 **Phone:** 1 416 596 2299 **Email:** email@bharchitects.com

To learn more about B+H, please visit our website and social media at: <u>www.bharchitects.com</u> <u>www.facebook.com/bharchitects.to</u> <u>www.twitter.com/BHarchitects</u> <u>www.linkedin.com/company/b-h-architects</u>

#### Actions Taken:

A feedback process has been established as follows:

- If a complaint is received about the manner in which we provide services or facilities to persons with disabilities, a member of our Human Resources team will:
  - 1) Review and investigate the complaint
  - 2) Get in touch with the complainant in a timely manner and accessible format as requested
  - 3) Formulate a resolution with the topic(s) brought to light in mind



4) Policies and procedures will be updated to reflect the resolution

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2012 Implementation timeframe: September 2010 to January 2012 Completion date: January 1, 2012

#### Format of Documents

All documents required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service including B+H's AODA policy, notices of temporary disruptions, training and training records and feedback processes are available upon request subject to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. When providing these documents to a person with a disability, B+H will endeavor to provide the document, or the information contained in the document, in a format that takes into account the person's disability in a timely manner.

Required legislative compliance: January 1, 2012 Implementation timeframe: September 2010 to January 2012 Completion date: January 1, 2012

## 5. DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES

#### The Built Environment

B+H is committed to greater accessibility in, out of, and around the building we use. When required by law, we will ensure that our facilities incorporate the standards for barrier-free design as existing spaces are renovated and/or new spaces are obtained. We will put procedures in place to prevent service disruptions to our accessible parts of our public spaces.

#### Actions Taken:

- B+H Toronto studio is currently in a wheelchair accessible building with ramps and elevators
- All workspace, bathrooms and kitchen in Toronto studio are accessible
- We will comply with the AODA Design of Public Spaces standards when undertaking new construction or planning significant alterations to our studio and to public spaces